

PROCEEDINGS  
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DESCRIPTIONS OF TWO NEW MUSKRATS.

BY N. HOLLISTER.

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A systematic study of the muskrats discloses two unnamed subspecies, preliminary descriptions of which are herewith presented. Both new forms are based upon specimens in the collection of the United States Biological Survey.

**Fiber zibethicus mergens** subsp. nov.

*Type* from Fallon, Nevada. No. 156,880 U. S. National Museum, Biological Survey Collection. ♀ adult, skin and skull. April 3, 1908. Collected by S. E. Piper.

*General characters*.—Differs from *F. z. osoyoosensis* in its much paler color and distinct dorsal stripe, and from *F. z. pallidus* in its large size and darker colors.

*Color*.—Fresh pelage: Above grayish brown; head and dorsal area blackish; cheeks, shoulders, and sides rusty; underparts creamy white with central area pale cinnamon or russet; usual spot on chin blackish brown. Fall specimens before the black hairs have come in are sometimes quite rusty above. Worn or washed out pelage: Above uniform pale yellowish brown; sides and underparts with little rusty.

*Cranial characters*.—Skull smaller than that of *osoyoosensis*, with shorter rostrum, more broadly spreading zygomata, and heavier jugal; much larger than that of *pallidus*.

*Measurements of type*.—Total length, 540; tail vertebrae, 240; hind foot, 76. Skull: Basal length, 61.6; zygomatic breadth, 40; palatal length, 39.3; length of nasals, 21; breadth of nasals, 9.8; alveolar length of upper molar series, 15.5.

*Remarks*.—*Fiber z. mergens* is a pale form of the *osoyoosensis* type, occupying the northern part of the Great Basin. There is no evidence of direct intergradation with the very different *pallidus* on the south.

**Fiber zibethicus zalophus** subsp. nov.

*Type* from Becharof Lake, Alaska. No. 131,488 U. S. National Museum, Biological Survey Collection. Skin and skull. October, 1903. Collected by A. G. Maddren.

*General characters.*—Tail short; hind foot small; skull with zygomata not broadly spreading anteriorly; molars small.

*Color.*—Fresh pelage: General tone of upperparts bistre, darkest on back and hips, with little or no rusty coloring; sides like back, but with a slight russet tinge; brown spot on chin reduced to a mere streak. Underparts creamy white with a cinnamon wash, varying in its intensity, and shading to white on throat and hind legs; lips whitish. Worn or washed out pelage: Upperparts russet to cinnamon, varying greatly in the specimens at hand, but usually showing much more red than in fresh coat, or in any pelage of *F. z. spatulatus*.

*Cranial characters.*—Skull with zygomata not broadly spreading anteriorly as in *spatulatus*; rostrum and nasals longer; parietals very small, squamosal covering most of area of braincase, even in young animals; interorbital ridge extreme in development into a blade-like crest; teeth small.

*Measurements.*—The series from the type locality was received without flesh measurements. The length of hind foot of the type, taken from the dry specimen, is 66. Four adults from Lake Clark and Cook Inlet, Alaska, measured in the flesh, average: Total length, 533; tail vertebrae, 228; hind foot, 69.7. Skull of type: Basal length, 60; zygomatic breadth, 38.3; palatal length, 38.3; length of nasals, 20.9; breadth of nasals, 9.2; alveolar length of upper molar series, 14.4.

*Remarks.*—*Fiber z. zalophus* is a well marked form easily separated from *spatulatus* by a number of constant characters. It ranges from the Alaska Peninsula to the Cook Inlet region.